

not yet voted by Parliament.¹ Even those who understood that they had only come to complete the collection of the grant imperfectly levied in the winter, were little better pleased. Heavy burdens incurred for an unsuccessful war render the taxpayer suspicious and quarrelsome. The King had found reason to doubt the honesty of the first board of collectors, and the nation thought no better of the second. With or without ground, rumours were afloat that the new tax was a private job allowed for the benefit of the new commissioners. The chief of these, John Leg, was said to have bribed the King's council to give the obnoxious powers to himself and his friends.² The feeling against them was general, and not confined to the classes that revolted. Some even held them responsible for the outbreak.

Tax has troubled us all,
 Probat lioc mors tot validorum.
 The King thereof had
 small, Ftdt in manibus
 cnpidorum.³

Another cause that contributed to the ill-success of the commission was the general habit of disobedience to the King's petty officers, to his sheriffs, escheaters and tax-collectors, a habit now common to all classes alike, as much to the noble and his armed retainers, as to the serf and free labourer banded in their unions and growing daily in self-confidence and strength. To this universal contempt for the royal authority and for all its agents, the Chancellor attributed the Rising, when he lectured the Houses of Parliament on the subject two years later. These bad habits, he said, neither began nor ended in the summer of '81.⁴

Apart from the questions of serfdom and the regulation of wages, which were the principal causes of the rebellion, the catastrophe may be regarded as the proper punishment of the governing class for the follies and crimes of many years. They had murdered the peace and progress of France in a fit of blind and boyish patriotism, so naive and exuberant that it can scarcely be judged as a rational choice. They had long drained the joyous cup of military glory, plunder and tribute.

* ¹ *Cont. Eulog.*, 351, line 36.
 * Knighton, ii. 130; *Cont. Eulog.*, 351; *Mon. Eve.*,
 23.
 * *Pol. P6e?ns*, i. 224. * *Rot. Parl** iii. 150.